

To A New Year by Aceofstars16

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: New Year's Eve, Other

Language: English

Characters: Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper

Relationships: Eleven & Jim "Chief" Hopper

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-01-01

Updated: 2018-01-01

Packaged: 2022-04-03 15:09:35

Rating: Not Rated

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 952

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Happy New Year! This is just a little fic I wrote for the new year, just Hopper and El's first and second New Year's Eve together, and the difference a year makes.

To A New Year

Author's Note:

[Tumblr post](#)

New Year's Eve was always a hectic night for Hopper. Back in the city he was almost always on duty – making sure idiots didn't set anything on fire and keeping an eye out for drunk drivers. Those night had been nothing close to fun, but there had been one year he had gotten to stay home and celebrate with Sara. That was the year before she died. And then he moved to Hawkins. You would think a small town wouldn't have too many rowdy people, but you'd be wrong. Plus, being the chief of police meant Hopper had to keep an eye out for every little thing. The past few years he would work well into the night and then go home and pass out – sometimes with alcohol, sometimes without. Tonight was different though.

It had only been a week since he had found Eleven in the woods – freezing and starving. They had worked on cleaning up the cabin. There was still work to be done but it was getting better.

Hopper didn't quite know what to make of the girl, he barely knew her, and she barely knew him, but she had trusted him enough to come with him. She was quiet, not much of a companion. Yet. That's what Hopper told himself each morning as he drove to work.

This morning he had made sure to pull El aside and explain that he would be home very late that night and that she should eat without him. Part of him wanted to try to get back early enough to celebrate the new year with her – after all, he doubted she had ever celebrated New Years before – but he knew that was unrealistic when it came to his job. Besides, people would ask questions if he did and that wasn't a risk he was willing to take. He had put El in danger once before, and that guilt still weighed him down. Never again.

Exhaustion pulled at Hopper as he drove home from yet another long New Years Eve night. Compared to the past, the night hadn't been too bad, but there had still been some idiots to deal with. The annoyances plus the long hours resulted in Hopper simply wanting to

rest, but that plan was halted when his knock on the cabin door was unanswered.

“Hey kid, open up, it’s me.” Hopper raised his voice a little, just in case she had fallen asleep.

No response.

Hopper banged out their code on the door again. “Come on El, it’s freezing out here.”

More silence.

Taking a deep breath, Hopper was about to knock again when he heard the locks clicking.

“About time,” he said as he walked into the cabin, only to freeze when he saw El looking at him cautiously from her room. She had been hesitant around him before but it almost looked like she was hiding.

“Hey kid, you okay?”

“Boom.”

Hopper tilted his head. “Wha-?” Then it dawned on him. Somehow, explaining fireworks to El had completely slipped his mind. Normally you shouldn’t be able to hear many all the way out here, but clearly she had.

“Those were just fireworks kiddo, nothing to be scared of.”

She looked at him, fear still glistening in her eyes.

Hopper sighed. “Hey, it’s okay. They won’t hurt you.”

El looked at him a little longer then whispered. “Promise?”

Geez, what was with all of these promises? Shaking that question aside, Hopper nodded. “Yes, I promise. You’re safe, okay?”

A moment of hesitation, then a nod.

“Alright, now how about we get some sleep?”

Another nod.

Hopper relaxed, glad he could finally get the rest his body was aching for. But he had only been lying down for a few minutes when he heard the bedroom door open. Holding back a groan, he opened his eyes and saw El’s silhouette as she walked over. But she didn’t come to him, she simply curled up on the couch.

“You okay, kid?”

“Still hear them.”

The fireworks. Of course. They were still going off occasionally – not loud enough to be too much of a bother, but enough to be noticeable.

“Yeah, they sometimes go on for a while.”

Silence, then, “Can I stay here?”

“Sure kiddo.”

It wasn’t any big gesture, but Hopper felt a small spark of happiness. El seemed to find comfort in being around him. Maybe that was just because having another human around relaxed her, but maybe, just maybe she was starting to feel at home here.

A year later, Hopper had managed to get off earlier than usual. Not much, he still had to stay till almost eleven, but considering the past few years, it was welcome. However, this time he didn’t go to the cabin, he drove to the Byer’s house. He had dropped El off there in the morning so she wouldn’t be alone and so she could enjoy the day with her friends.

It wasn’t a big party, nothing over the top, but the kids seemed to be enjoying it – teenagers included. Not only were El’s friends there, but also Nancy, Jonathan, and surprisingly Steve.

Hopper found a smile playing on his face as he watched the kids counting down the new year. El turned at him and smiled, holding up

her popper. He held up his own and smiled. A chuckle escaped his mouth as the kids counted down the new year before pulling the strings on their poppers. Confetti rained down all over them and Hopper couldn't help but remember how hesitant El had been of the holiday last year. But things were different this year, and he found himself looking forward to a new year with his new daughter.